

**DEBRIEFING OF THE PUEBLA  
CONFERENCE**

**USAID - LAC BUREAU**

**RONALD REGAN BUILDING**

**OCTOBER 31, 2002**

**Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity  
No. HNE-I-00-00-00038-00**

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USAID - LAC BUREAU  
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This meeting was held in USAID in the Ronald Regan Building from 2 to 4 pm on October 31, 2002.

Attendees: David Evans, Rebecca Adams, Evelyn Rodriguez-Perez, Barbara Knox-Seith, Don Graybill, Maielle Helman, Siena Fleischer, Jim Hoxeng, Roger Rasnike, Tom Judy

**Agenda:**

- I. Objectives in Attending**
    - Encourage engagement in evidence based reading instructions**
    - Planning with individual reading regional programs**
    - Initiating communication structures within and between the two regions**
    - AID/W and the missions**
  - II. Review of the week (Barbara)**
    - Opening Reception on Wednesday night**
    - Conference Highlights**
      - IRA**
      - Session of value, and individual contacts (Josefina, Goodmans, Yolanda de la Garza, Delia Lerner)**
    - Overview of Saturday's and Sunday's Working Sessions**
  - III. Agreements reached (Evelyn)**
    - New timelines (pending meetings, pilots)**
    - Offering from SEP**
    - Technical Needs**
    - Communication Systems**
  - IV. Next Steps: Clarifying Creative's role**
    - What resources will be offered**
    - Money**
    - Systems for tapping into services**
    - Guidelines for services**
- Evelyn began by extending a thank you to Creative and the International Reading Association (IRA) for their support.
  - Don reported that the 7<sup>th</sup> annual reading conference in Puebla sponsored by the International Reading Association (IRA) was very productive and stimulating. It began Wednesday evening (10/16) and lasted through Saturday morning (10/19). The event was well attended. While it was intended for 1,200 participants, approximately 2,000 attended. There were 11 optional sessions offered.
  - This reunion of the technical participants of CETT on the afternoon day of 10/19 and all of 10/20 was an excellent opportunity for people to meet one another, identify areas

of mutual need and plan for the future. Participants were able to network, think collaboratively and strategize for the future of the CETT.

- Barabra Knox-Seith and Evelyn Rodriguez-Perez of USAID were present as well as Josefina Tinajero, Dean of Education at the University of Texas in El Paso.

### **Josefina Tinajero**

- Josefina Tinajero was the featured speaker for many workshop sessions and shared her wealth of knowledge on new literacy approaches. Her educational reform model is the Texas model, which was implemented state wide. Her presentation included both theoretical and practical pieces highlighting the importance of phonetics and language approaches. The appropriateness of a model largely depends on the culture and kind of learners present.
- With her vision, Josefina would be an excellent candidate to support and contribute to the development of the CETTs. Her expertise in systems thinking (especially rural areas) is valuable. Her specialty is bilingual education of non-dominant language speakers. She brought with her materials including scripted training manuals, which were informative and innovative. They allow trainers to easily relay concepts to learners and provide a basic framework on which to build. The integrated reading approach is a whole language approach that did not allow for decoding.
- The Central American and Andean subregional committees are planning to develop their programs and all felt they benefited from Josefina's presentation Wednesday at the opening reception.

### **Contacts**

- Barbara, Evelyn and Don, Kenneth, the Goodmans', Delia Lerner, and Yolanda de la Garza met with a Venezuelan contact from IRA over lunch to discuss how the CETTs and the IRA could form a mutually beneficial relationship. The follow-up meeting here in Washington, DC will take place Wednesday, November 6, 2002 at 11:30 a.m.
- Sessions were very complete and varied in themes. Innovative, hands-on teaching approaches stirred an interest among Latin American participants who may have been accustomed to purely theoretical presentations in the past.
- A conversation concerning the politics of reading in the United States was raised. Latin American conference attendees made it clear that while issues of literacy were in question in the United States, that it was not their experience or concern in their own countries.

### **Aguirre's assistance**

- Aguirre International will be performing an Info Memorandum for the CETT project. Roger Rasnike and Tom Judy will be involved in this endeavor and please direct any inquiries to (202) 263 9269 (fax (202) 296-6926).
- A historical review in summary form would be a helpful resource to provide a larger landscape for new people entering the CETT project. A comprehensive tool to consult, which elaborates on the proposal and planning process would be extremely useful.
- CAII's Program Assistant, Siena Fleischer, is currently updating a directory of all individuals and institutions involved in this project to be available in the near future.

### **SEP Ministry**

- The Mexican Secretary of Public Education is prepared to offer assistance in the form of technical training to the CETTs of Central America. Their offer to share their experience and knowledge was kindly received by USAID/W in a letter to David Evans from The Director General, Dr. Daniel Gonzalez Spencer dated October 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Participant Backgrounds and Project Planning**

- The participants range in levels of qualification and background in literacy, but do show enormous motivation to realize this project. Some have been involved already in the meeting that took place in Miami.
- Representatives from Guatemala and the Dominican Republic are showing initiative by using their own funds and moving ahead in project planning.
- The only country of the eight involved not represented at the conference was Ecuador.

### **Conference details**

- During conference, the participants worked to develop a methodology together. In a collaborative style, they preferred to convene and brainstorm as one group which showed a sense of solidarity.
- Ricardo (UPN) and Eliana (Perú) facilitated meetings on Sunday. As acting regional leaders, they expressed anxiety regarding the project's timeline. Still, they are prepared to meet deadlines.
- There was discussion of a tentatively scheduled meeting in December to develop a framework for long-term planning, begin technical assistance, and gather samples. Due to the proximity of the proposed timeframe, Roger suggested that we offer facilitation in the month of January (but not December).
- Many subregional groups have identified area experts. Technical needs were brainstormed as well to inventory the material and resources potentially necessary in successful implementation of the program.
- Paul Hoyt wants to be apprised
- ILCE's, Jorge Durán is ready, willing and able to help
- The SEP of Mexico has extended generous support
- Don made useful suggestions that an inventory listing all possible U.S. resources would be helpful as a reference. This would include documents or surveys containing information about public/private universities and their strengths and weaknesses.
- Don also suggested an Interagency Working Group (IWG) with the State Department's Education and Cultural Affairs Bureau which may have established networks of programs which provide technical support

### **Communication Systems**

- This was an area of concern highlighted during the meeting in Miami as well as Puebla.
- Alem (from Bolivia) volunteered to set-up a yahoo group account which will serve as an outlet for discussion as well as a location to store documents. This will provide for a more reliable venue than personal email.
- Translation in future conferences was a topic raised in order to include participating members from the Caribbean. A point was mentioned that in smaller groups it can be

more distracting to have translation aids present. As for training manuals, models can most definitely be duplicated into other languages.

### **Creative/USAID's role in the future**

- Don raised two important questions in order to answer what Creative's role will be in the future of this project.
  - 1) What resources should be made available?
  - 2) What will be the role of the technical provider and what exactly is to be made available?
- CAII plans to eventually shift the initiative and leadership of the project to the Centers themselves, supporting program start-up and then allowing for almost entirely self-sufficient centers to continue developing. AID will be a monitor in the process.
- Barbara posed the question of what we have to offer the CETTs? Where are the "boundaries" when considering an offer of technical assistance and how do we set those parameters? Should an SOW be put into writing to more clearly illustrate out intended direction?
- David reiterated that these centers have been awarded 14 million dollars over the next three years. They are capable of allocating funds to buy expertise and technical assistance if they so choose.
- David also mentioned creating a list of needs from which AID could identify areas where they have the comparative advantage (ie federal government, private consultants, best practices...) List of requests/brainstorming ideas need refinement before delivery. Once we know what we can offer, they can set their budgets and proceed. As backstoppers, we must prioritize needs
- Rebecca raised the question of helping individual institutions or taking an overall macro approach. In addition, how will we use BEPS to help our missions? She mentioned possibly creating a purchase order where one-third of the cost would belong to CAII and the rest to USAID.
- It was agreed that USAID should be supportive in the beginning and provide whatever help is necessary to allow the CETTs to establish themselves. Collaboration will be highly encouraged. This help may include monitoring or evaluative support. In terms of a projected timeline, it could signify that assistance would be largely offered in the first year, but less so in subsequent years.
- Don asked who would be the Director of this initiative and highlighted it as an important need. He mentioned that by developing criteria of the strategic issues involved in the project, we could ultimately help the missions in identifying the potential capabilities. We must clarify to whom they go to for help/assistance.
- Training could consist of three person consultative teams (Doug Carnine mentioned). Developing their own framework for the methodology and identifying their own experts from their respective subregions is essential for the ownership and investment of the CETTs.
- Tom emphasized the importance in the project getting off to a good start. He stressed that we must identify areas of need and prioritize outside needs. LAC must develop a vision for this project and a potential transition period (of six months). We must identify important priorities of change such as leadership and task masters.
- David suggested that a more feasible meeting time would be in February or March. Although the participants do want to get started, their projected date of December may

be impossible to plan in a timely manner in order to incorporate training etc. David envisioned a "training of trainers" seminar (*talleres*), assembling successful practices and projects with USAID as the leader.

- Technical staff would play an active role in the early months. They would facilitate the top three priorities (related to the methodology) and promote efficient time use.
- An email to all CETT directors is in order to prioritize topics and create the content of the seminar. What type of outside help will they require?
- How can Josefina Tinajero be involved and what sort of time commitment can she agree to?
- What needs does INMED have?
- Don suggested an addition meeting when it became clear that more involved planning needs to take place.
- Rebecca mentioned the need for clear fundraising and M&E planning. She also suggested a meeting where all CETT directors could meet and decide who is taking what responsibilities. They need to know how to sell the project as well. A potential networking partner could be the IRA with information about universities and NGO's with related pursuits. With the idea of building a consortium, an AOL grant to support the CETTs would be useful. Also, Rotary International is ending their decade of work on polio. Their next focus could be reading or educational funding.
- Next Wednesday, November 6, 2002 at 11:30 a.m. a general conversation on collaboration with the IRA will take place as a luncheon. This will be an explorative conversation on ways which IRA can help us and successful practices they have used. Expansive discussion took place with Alan Farstrup, Executive Director of the IRA.
- David agreed that we should hire Josefina Tinajero and bring on Antonieta as a facilitator. He suggested that translation should be considered when working with the Caribbean region. The group felt that smaller gatherings could, at times, be more difficult to manage when translation resources are present.
- Roger mentioned that experts may bring in new ideas which could potentially distract from the direction of the project. Therefore, when contemplating the future training sessions, it is important to consider that the consultants target key issues pertinent to the future goals of the CETTs.
- A meeting regarding the up-coming trip (December) to the Andean region is scheduled for Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> and 2pm. Antonieta will be present. INMED will be present as well.